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**Children & Family Services  
Committee**

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**SSB 5141**

**Brief Description:** Providing for early intervention services for children with disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Schmidt, McAuliffe, Delvin, Rockefeller, Shin, Weinstein, Berkey, Pflug, Kohl-Welles, Hargrove, Kline, Regala, Thibaudeau and Spanel).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires school districts to provide or contract for early intervention services to eligible children with disabilities from birth to three years of age.

**Hearing Date:** 2/20/06

**Staff:** Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

**Background:**

Special education consists of instruction and related services specially designed to meet the unique needs and abilities of students with disabilities. It is provided at no cost to eligible students between three and 21 years of age.

School districts may, but are not required to, provide early intervention services to eligible preschool-age children with disabilities. Districts that provide these services are entitled to the regular apportionments from state and county school funds in addition to allocations from state excess cost funds made available for special services for children with disabilities. If school districts opt to serve eligible preschool-age children, they must do so in the birth-to-three age group under state regulations implementing part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is the lead state agency responsible for early intervention services to children with a disability in the birth-to-three age group.

**Summary of Bill:**

By September 1, 2009, each school district is required to provide or contract for early intervention services to all eligible children with disabilities from birth to three years of age. Eligibility must be determined according to Part C of the IDEA and as specified in state regulation.

School districts are required to provide or contract for early intervention services in partnership with local birth-to-three lead agencies and birth-to-three providers. The early intervention services must not supplant services or funding currently provided in the state for early intervention services to eligible children with disabilities from birth to three years of age.

The state-designated birth-to-three lead agency must be payor of last resort for provided birth-to-three early intervention services.

On September 1, 2009, special education and training programs provided by the state and school districts for children with disabilities shall be extended to include children of preschool age. The birth-to-three early intervention services are not part of the state's program of basic education pursuant to Article IX of the state Constitution.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.